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Annual Review

2021



THE  TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES

**GOOD
UNIVERSITY
GUIDE
2022**

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IN THE UNITED
KINGDOM

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Introduction by the Principal

The breadth and depth of life, study, research, and achievement at the University of St Andrews is breath-taking in any year, and only more so in one where we have all experienced immense changes brought about by a global pandemic.

This *Annual Review* provides a simple snapshot of the progress of Scotland's oldest university during one of the most challenging periods in its long history.

The Review is anchored by the themes of our current University Strategy 2018-2023 – World-leading, Diverse, Global, Entrepreneurial and Socially Responsible – because the strength of strategy carried us through the tests which Covid set St Andrews.

Our staff and students responded to abnormal circumstance quite brilliantly. Students have excelled despite being disrupted and dispersed, each with their own story of personal sacrifice made to ensure our community and town were largely protected from the toll of Covid which has been so readily apparent elsewhere.

St Andrews staff made very similar sacrifices, but continued to provide a sector-leading teaching experience, globally important research, and an environment in which we all aimed to make each other's health and safety our guiding priority.

2021 was also the year we began to see hopeful new horizons. In-person graduations returned, foam flew again in the Quad, our classrooms and labs reopened, and for the first time ever, St Andrews unseated Oxbridge to come top of a major university league table.

It has been a privilege to lead this remarkable community of people over the past year. I do not for a minute underestimate how challenging 2021 was for many, but our resilience owes much to a shared sense of pragmatism, and balance, and the knowledge that this university does best when we value and respect one another.

As we look ahead to new possibilities, new challenges, and the development of a new University Strategy, rarely has our motto seemed more apt. Ever to Excel.




Professor Sally Mapstone FRSE
Principal and Vice-Chancellor



St Andrews at a Glance


10,426 students

 8,261 undergraduates

 2,165 postgraduates



137 countries

 4 faculties 21 schools

29 units 3,100 staff

Total income up 11% to

£290.4m

In 2021 our median pay gap reduced from 16.6% to

15.1%

Funding body grants totalled £48.2m, an increase of

£9.4m

Income from donations and endowments up £1.3m to

£6.5m

Research income was up 9.1% to

£43.7m

Investment income, which helps to support scholarships, bursaries and widening access initiatives, increased by 2.9% to

£3.9m

94.5%

 of students entering employment or further study after graduation

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**BEST IN
SCOTLAND
3RD
IN THE UK**
Guardian University
Guide 2022

**TOP IN THE UK
FOR STUDENT
ACADEMIC
EXPERIENCE**
National Student
Survey 2021

Members of the Estates Team who were shortlisted for a Times Higher Education award in 2021



Cocktails in the Quad

St Andrews Can Do

At a time when we were being told what we couldn't do, we chose to focus instead on what we could do, and so 'Can Do' was born, a joint initiative between the University and Students' Association, introduced at the start of the pandemic, providing a safe place in which students could hold and attend Covid-safe events.

Can Do was made possible thanks to supporters of our Covid Appeal and the St Andrews Can Do Fund, facilitating events in a marquee on Lower College Lawn in line with government guidelines. Additional activities took place across campus, the highlight of which saw more than 700 staff and students attend Cocktails in the Quad, so popular it sold out in 16 minutes.

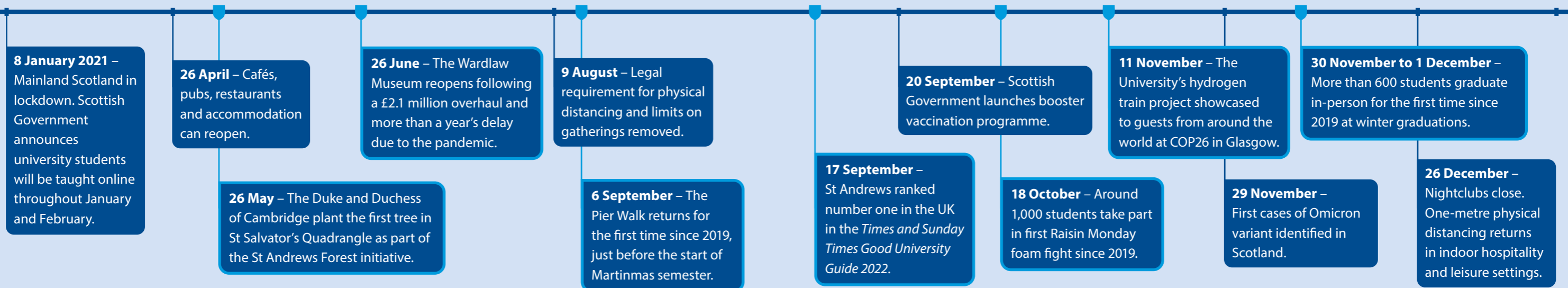
Our Covid Helpdesk relieved pressure on NHS services by providing triage and support for students and staff and a Rapid Response team was set up for reporting cases. We purchased more than 100 laptops to help children of staff and postgraduate students access online learning, thanks to donations to the Principal's Strategic Response Fund. And, in a video series entitled St Andrews Lockdown Tales, staff explored the highs and lows of life during a pandemic, recording the significance of this period in our collective history.

Externally, several of our academic staff were called upon to support the UK's response to the pandemic, including Professor Sir Ian Boyd, School of Biology, who sits on the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE); and Professor Stephen Reicher, School of Psychology and Neuroscience, a prominent member of the SAGE subcommittee advising the Government on behavioural science. Dr Muge Cevik from the School of Medicine was appointed to the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG). Professor Matthew Holden from our School of Biology was seconded into Public Health Scotland as the Genomics Strategic Lead, helping build a SARS-CoV-2 sequencing service in the NHS, and our Principal, Professor Sally Mapstone, sits on the Scottish Government's Covid Recovery Group.

Timeline

2021

2022



Returning to St Andrews

In the summer of 2021, the Wardlaw Museum reopened following more than a year's delay due to the pandemic. Named after the University's founder and first Chancellor, Bishop Henry Wardlaw, our flagship museum has undergone a £2.1m overhaul delivering 50 per cent more space, reimagined displays in four thematic galleries, a new temporary exhibitions space, and a remodelled entrance and shop. It sits at the heart of St Andrews' cultural quarter, which now includes the Laidlaw Music Centre, Byre Theatre, and under development Younger Hall, scheduled to re-open summer 2022.

September saw the return of one of our best-loved traditions, the Pier Walk, the first to take place since 2019. The Pier Walk is one of our oldest customs and the first of the new academic year. After Chapel Service on Sunday, undergraduate students in iconic red gowns and postgraduates in black walk to the end of the pier, up the ladder and back along the top.

The following month almost a thousand students gathered on Lower College Lawn for the triumphant return of our annual Raisin Monday foam fight (pictured). And, in late November and early December, we were delighted to host our first in-person graduations since 2019 with more than 600 students walking across the stage at the specially transformed Sports Centre. Leading broadcaster, political commentator and (almost) local boy Andrew Marr was awarded an honorary degree alongside internationally renowned pianist Professor Joanna MacGregor and leading mathematician Professor Caroline Series.



Back on track



Winter graduations returned at our Sports Centre in 2021

Socially Responsible St Andrews

We welcomed the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge back to launch the St Andrews Forest, part of plans announced in the University's Environmental Sustainability Strategy to become carbon net zero by 2035. The Duke and Duchess planted the first tree, in St Salvator's Quadrangle, as a living symbol of the importance of sustainability to our future.

Students sent a powerful message to world leaders ahead of the COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow as they demanded 'Action Not Words' with a solar-powered light display in St Salvator's

Quad. At the conference we showcased our hydrogen train project, led by Professor John Irvine's Hydrogen Accelerator team in the School of Chemistry.

We won Sustainability Institution of the Year in the national Green Gown Awards and the Student Engagement category for the Third Generation Project, which leads climate justice through social change. Our state-of-the-art building at Eden Campus, Walter Bower House, was recognised in the Scottish Design Awards in the Architecture: Building Re-use category.

Our Community Fund, which launched in 2020, has given more than £93,000 to local projects. During 2021, we supported projects including Fife Migrants Forum's new Conversational Café, and breathing and singing workshops with St Andrews Voices to help with recovery from long Covid.

We also partnered with St Andrews Botanic Garden, Fife Council, Fife Coast and Countryside Trust and Crail Community Partnership for *Meadows in the Making*, an initiative that will see more University land – as well as other local green spaces – transformed into wildflower havens.

Eyes on the prize

The St Andrews Prize for the Environment recognises global projects which make significant contributions to environmental issues and concerns.



Scan the QR code to read about the 2021 winners of the £100,000 prize.



World-leading St Andrews

In 2021 the University of St Andrews was ranked the top university in the UK, according to *The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022*. It is the first time in the near 30-year history of the definitive Guide, and UK university league tables in general, that a university other than Oxford or Cambridge has topped the rankings.

We took first place this year by virtue of strong performances in student satisfaction, research, teaching quality, entry standards and graduate outcomes.

Guide Editor Alastair McCall said: "St Andrews' achievement in topping our institutional table should not be underestimated. It is no fluke. The University has been closing in on the Oxbridge duopoly for several years, buoyed by outstanding levels of student satisfaction which have peaked during the past year of pandemic disruption on campus. The lead St Andrews now has over other universities in this key area of university performance is remarkable."

Our world-leading research in 2021 included work from colleagues in the School of Biology and School of Psychology and Neuroscience, which was instrumental in creating Scotland's first national brain health and dementia research strategy. Other highlights included subjects as diverse as chimpanzee communication, ocean acidity in the Pacific, planetary water, the importance of zinc in the treatment of diabetes, and plagiarism in medieval writing.



Read our research

Coming together from around the globe, researchers at St Andrews collaborate across disciplines to make new discoveries and tackle some of the world's biggest challenges.

Scan the QR codes to read our research showcase and our research blog:



Diverse St Andrews

In 2021 our School of Biology became the first in Scotland to be awarded the prestigious Gold Athena Swan Award – an accreditation which rewards excellence in advancing gender equality across higher education and research.

The University holds the Bronze Athena Swan Charter at an institutional level, and although several academic departments already hold silver accreditation in their own right, the School of Biology is the first at the University to receive the coveted Gold Award.

The University has appointed senior academics to lead our institutional submission for the Silver Athena Swan Charter, and to prepare our submission for the Race Equalities Charter. We have commissioned a major external review of race and ethnicity in the University to provide a baseline for the latter.

We have created a new position on the senior executive team – the Vice-Principal for People and Diversity – to oversee this work and lead Diverse St Andrews into its next phase, and have successfully recruited to this post.

In November, our student-led Saints LGBT+ group hosted Transfest, a week-long celebration of transgender and non-binary people, culminating in the Transgender Day of Remembrance. Saints LGBT+ is a subcommittee of the Students' Association that strives for an open community for all, running events such as Transfest and Queerfest, a week-long festival that focuses on arts and history.

Following extensive consultation with staff and students, our disability policy was launched at the end of 2021.

One woman and her dog

At our November graduations, Megan McEvoy crossed the stage to receive her degree with her assistance dog by her side. Without Flint, whom she credits for her success following a sudden disability, Megan says it would have been “very unlikely” she would have been able to complete her studies.



Global St Andrews

Our demographic profile is distinctive with more than 45 per cent of our students and staff coming from outside the UK. We are ranked among the top universities in the world for our international outlook and are determined to extend this element of our identity while the future of our role in Europe is under enormous change.

Our global PhD cohort is increasing with more partners and wider subject range. Despite travel restrictions caused by the pandemic, we still had more than 200 students on study or work abroad placements in 2021.

In October we launched a new undergraduate scholarship portfolio called Saints Abroad to support students who are studying or working abroad as part of their degree. These scholarships are generously supported by donors, including the late Miss Marjorie Moncrieff, the 600th Anniversary Campaign and Santander Universities. We also successfully applied to the UK Government's new Turing scheme for supporting students studying abroad, funding around 150 students in this first year of the programme.

Our Virtual Alumni Weekend saw hundreds of alumni join us from across six continents, representing seven decades of graduations. Our Development team hosted the first online Global Burns Night in 2021, allowing our community to honour Scotland's national Bard wherever they live in the world. And our Saint Connect programme,

which provides a platform for our alumni, students and parents to reconnect with former classmates, teamed up with the University Careers team to hold Coffee Connect, matching fellow graduates or students to discuss careers and grow networks.

From tackling the global climate emergency to playing our part in the Covid pandemic, our researchers, staff and students are at the forefront of innovative research, partnering with institutes across the world. We have developed seed-funding programmes to facilitate collaborations for addressing areas of pressing global challenge between our academics and those of strategic partners, such as the University of Bonn and Emory University.

We were voted in as a member of the University of the Arctic (UARctic) in May 2021, and continue to be an active member of the Europaeum network of leading European universities.

Our Global Fellows programme that brings leading researchers and scholars from across the world to St Andrews for short stays continues to go from strength to strength. We awarded ten Global Fellowships in 2021, including five Senior Global Fellows, to leading scholars from the University of British Columbia, Harvard, Bonn, and LMU Munich, amongst others.



Saints Abroad

Scan the QR code to read about our students' experiences studying abroad and learn more about our global partnerships.





The CEED (Centre for Educational Enhancement and Development) team

“Taking part in the Summer Teams Enterprise Programme as a student helped me realise that I already possessed an entrepreneurial mindset and the opportunities at the University helped me nurture this mindset. My experience with STEP gave me the confidence to apply to the Saltire Scholars Programme run by the Entrepreneurial Scotland Foundation, and this led to a full-time job after graduating.”

Alina Kichigina
Alumna

Entrepreneurial St Andrews

Our Entrepreneurship Centre at Eden Campus provides an innovative space to nurture entrepreneurial spirit in students and staff. With collaborative working and a pitch practice arena, we provide the practical skills for participants to explore the full entrepreneurial journey, turn their research and expertise into a societal benefit, and grow their ideas into successful and sustainable businesses.

In 2021 the centre ‘graduated’ its first cohort of 54 students from our eight-week FastStart programmes, which are practical training courses focussed on for profit and social enterprise ideas, in addition to web development and cloud computing.

We enjoyed success in the Converge Challenge, Scottish universities leading spinout competition. Two St Andrews spinouts, X-Genix (Chemistry) and Lightwater Sensors (Physics) were among the eight finalists. Professor Rebecca Goss also won the AccelerateHer Award for her work in X-Genix.

Initiatives such as the Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP) programme, the Summer Teams Enterprise Programme, the St Andrews Research Internship Scheme and Pecha Kucha events are designed to facilitate innovative and interdisciplinary research connections. Our work is already being recognised by the sector, with the Vertically Integrated Projects programme winning the 2021 Herald’s HE Award.

In collaboration with the Students’ Association, we awarded the Enterprising Mind of the Year Award to Deanna Coleman, who proposed the St Andrews Forest Initiative to offset student travel emissions.

The Entrepreneurship Centre facilitated St Andrews Enterprise Week in October, organised in partnership with the Enterprise Committee and St Andrews Business Club, with a full schedule of entrepreneurs, industry experts and speakers.

Forward-looking St Andrews

Great universities never stand still. They anticipate, lead, speak truth to power, and are the engines of innovation and change.

As this *Review* is published, there is a war in Europe which directly affects some of our students and staff, the Covid pandemic is still with us, the climate crisis begs urgent and innovative responses, digital technology offers academia new opportunities and challenges, and major constitutional questions are being asked in this country and others.

In 2022, we will bring forward a new University Strategy developing the World-leading, Diverse, Entrepreneurial and Socially Responsible themes of our existing strategy, and adding two others – Sustainable and Digital.

We will develop a roadmap demonstrating how we will achieve our ambitious goal to be net zero by 2035, finalise plans for an ambitious new fundraising campaign, and launch One St Andrews, an umbrella initiative to forge stronger links between the University, students and our local community, and to tackle the ignorance which can lead to intolerance.

We will stretch ourselves in a way we have long needed to be stretched by applying for Race Equality Charter Status and, under our Scotland's Future Initiative, we will support our staff and students to bring their intellects, ideas and voices to wider public discourse on the range of issues and opportunities which this country currently faces.

We will strive to maintain our pre-eminent position in university league tables, and continue to place people at the heart of our actions and choices. Our remarkable students and staff are the lifeblood of St Andrews, and our future relies on developing a University which allows them to use their talents to best effect.





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Designed by Print & Design, University of St Andrews, April 2022.
Photographs by Gayle McIntyre.

The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC013532.